CONNECTICUT

Message of His Excellency James E. English

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OF HIS EXCELLENCY

JAMES E. ENGLISH,

GOVERNOR OF CONNECTICUT,

TO THE

LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE,

MAY SESSION, 1867.

Printed by Order of the Legislature.

HARTFORD:
CASE, LOCKWOOD AND COMPANY, PRINTERS.
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MESSAGE.

FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE SENATE AND

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

In entering upon the duties to which I have been called at this interesting period of our history, I am impressed with the consciousness of my inability to meet the expectations of those who have so generously honored me with the trust; and I should be destitute of feeling were I not deeply affected by the confidence reposed in me by my fellow-citizens.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS.

The situation of public affairs is in every aspect important. Two years have elapsed since our country emerged from a civil war such as the world had never witnessed; a war had been waged to maintain the supremacy of the federal Constitution and the integrity of the National Union. Over the calamities of that unhappy conflict which desolated so large a portion of our country and carried sorrow into so many households, we long shall mourn; but as citizens of a common country we should strive to extinguish the vindictive resentments it engendered.

The right of a State voluntarially to withdraw from the Union has been abandoned by those who attempted to carry it into effect. Four years of sanguinary warfare brought this result to the country; and yet the great object of that war has thus far been defeated. The Union is not restored.

Ten States are, by the action of Congress, denied all participation in the National Government, the laws of which they are required to obey. Measures such as these tend to empire, not to union. If persisted in they must inevitably destroy the federative character of our government, and transform the Republic into a despotism. The course of legislation pursued by Congress towards the ten States of the South, is, in my judgment, wholly unwarranted by our fundamental law, and as fatal to the Union and the Constitution as the principle of secession which has been suppressed.

From the adoption of the Constitution there have been conflicting opinions and principles in regard to the powers which have been delegated to the Federal Government and those which have been reserved to the States. In the opinion of one portion of our countrymen the concentration and exercise of more power than was granted, is essential to give strength and efficacy to the central Government. Another portion insist that the authority conferred was ample—that indeed its tendency is constantly aggressive and increasing, encroaching upon the reserved rights of the States and upon the rights of the people, and that if not carefully held in check, all the important powers of the government will be ultimately absorbed in one great central empire. And around these conflicting opinions political organizations grew up at an early day in our history.

Until a recent period, the good sense, virtue and patriotism of our people so modified and tempered the excess of party spirit, that the public tranquillity has been preserved and the government and laws universally respected. But the passions of men at last gained sway. The restraints of the Constitution chafed upon those who were striving only for political power. One extreme begat another, until a large portion of the people of the slave-holding States madly took up arms to maintain the asserted right of secession. Few will question the sincerity of most of those who voluntarily took part in this armed resistance. The sufferings, hardships and sacrifices they endured, too clearly attest it.

Overpowered by the armies of the Republic, they surrendered, acknowledged their allegiance to the Government which they had opposed, and accepted the legal consequences of their acts. Their immense armies quietly dispersed to their homes under the terms of the surrender, and resumed their peaceful avocations.

To bring order out of chaos—to restore to their legitimate functions the State authorities, and to re-establish their broken relations with the Federal Government, became at once a work of necessity. As Commander-in-Chief of the armies, President Lincoln addressed himself to that work. Under his plan, matured by President Johnson, the States were reorganized. In obedience to its requirments, their Constitutions and laws were changed, and by the act of the people of each of those States, slavery was forever abolished. By this process the re-establishment of the Union was essentially consummated. Little more was thenceforward required for the country to move onward in a harmonious and prosperous career, than the admission of Senators and Representatives from those States to seats in Congress.

Unfortunately the tendency to centralization had received new impetus during the war, consequent on the exercise of extraordinary powers by the Government, and this developed a new and extreme partizan spirit. It demanded the exclusion of the late insurrectionary States from any constitutional rights within the Union. Assuming that the war in its practical results was a failure, that the Union is really divided, that the inhabitants of the ten States which combined under the so-called confederacy, are alien enemies, and with the exception of the blacks, are to be treated as a conquered and subjugated people, Congress has arbitrarily excluded the Senators and Representatives of these States from the halls of legislation, and refused even to examine their credentials. By this means, Congress has taken possession of the Government, and under the dictation of a committee, whose sessions have been held in secret, has set aside some of the most important and salutary provisions of the Constitution, and even menanced with its power the independent action of the judiciary.

The legislation of the Thirty-Ninth Congress was, to a large extent, a series of usurpations and infractions of the Constitution, commencing with propositions to enforce amendments of that instrument, in the inception of which nearly one-third of the States and fully one-third of the people, had no voice, and eventuating in placing that people in a time of profound peace, under military domination.

The bill to establish military governments over the ten Southern States, and which assumes to annul the State and municipal governments and the legal tribunals of that portion of our country, has justly alarmed the apprehensions of considerate and reflecting citizens. It is in effect establishing martial law over those States. But whence does Congress derive the power to subject any portion of the citizens of the United States to martial law? Martial law is not military law. It embraces the citizen as well as the soldier. It is the substitution of the will of the commanding officer in an enemy's country in time of war for the muncipal law which previously prevailed. It is a creature of necessity, and exists only where no muncipal law is in force, or where the success of military operations renders its suspension for the time being necessary. The deliberate enactment of martial law by a legislature is a solecism. For a legislature has time and opportunity to enact muncipal laws to be administered by civil tribunals in conformity to the Constitution or organic law. Congress has no power not granted to it by the Constitution, and martial law is something wholly without the Constitution, existing only by the absence of law. It has no more power under the Constitution to establish military governments in the Southern States than to institute an order of nobility in New England.

Within the last month it has been authoritatively declared by the Lord Chief Justice of England, in a notable case, that the power to establish martial law has never belonged to the British Crown, under any circumstances, and whether in the colonies or at home; and that "it never should be forgotten that whatever might be the charge of which a man might be

accused, though he might be a rebel and the worst traitor that was ever brought to the block, yet, until he was convicted and until his life was taken, he was still a British subject, entitled when tried to those safeguards which were of the essence of justice."

It is strange indeed that this power, so extraordinary that no British Sovereign ever dared to claim it as a prerogative of his crown, can be supposed to reside in the constitution of a republic, established by a people who revolted against Great Britain that they might better secure their liberties by the safeguards of a written constitution with limited and well defined powers.

But the evil consequences of this legislation do not stop with the establishment of martial law. Congress has assumed that power only for the purpose of more thoroughly accomplishing the subversion of State authority. By the military arm it has not only stricken down all local civil government in those States, but, by its aid, it determines who shall, and who shall not, participate in forming the governments that may be allowed to them for the regulation of their local concerns. It assumes the power to disfranchise the white inhabitants of those States and to enfranchise the black—thus condemning without conviction or trial a large portion of their intelligent population, and placing the political power in the hands of those who have never participated in the affairs of government, and a large majority of whom cannot read the ballots they are authorized to cast. This is not reconstruction. It is not a measure of peace, but a measure of war. Local self-government is the very corner-stone of our Republican fabric. All stable governments recognize its power as a mere principle of governmental policy. For a Republic to discard it, is suicidal.

It must be borne in mind that when these extraordinary powers were assumed by Congress, our armies had been withdrawn and disbanded. Peace had been proclaimed. Congress itself had acknowledged the suppression of the rebellion by a public act. All departments of government, State and National, were peacefully and without obstruction exercising

their functions in those States. The people were adapting themselves with unanimity and good feeling, and with remarkable order, to the changed social condition which followed the abolition of slavery and the disbandment of their armies.

If Congress can thus legislate for those States it is not difficult to foresee, in the not distant future, like interference in other States. If these powers, thus exercised, have been rightfully exercised, then the Constitution of Connecticut and the ancient right of the people, so often asserted when a colony of Great Britain, to "regulate their internal affairs in their own way," are henceforth subject to the will or caprice of a Congressional majority.

The Constitution requires that the President shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed; but Congress has seen fit to change the prescribed time of its meeting, so as to secure a continuous session for the purpose of enforcing laws by its own decrees, and to hold the constitutional authority of the Executive subject to its will. For this change, uncalled for and unexpected, the country was unprepared. In consequence of this, Connecticut was unrepresented in the popular branch during the late session, convened at an extraordinary time, during which laws of momentous interest were hurriedly passed in the absence of the Representatives of seventeen of the thirty-seven States of the Union. So broken and depleted was this fragmentary Congress that it did not venture to appoint the regular standing committees, though adopting without hesitation, laws of vital consequence to a large section of our common country, and in conflict with the settled policy of our Republican system.

In this connection I may with propriety allude to the course of the Senate in arrogating the power to select, as well as to confirm, and in dictating to the President in regard to his appointments. While the President is responsible for the faithful execution of the laws, the Senate, which is irresponsible, by an abuse of power, refuses to allow him to select agents in whom he has confidence, but insists that he shall only appoint those who are opposed to him, his measures, and the policy which he believes to be for the interest of the country. Es-

timable men of admitted ability and integrity, many of them having served with fidelity through the war, have been thus rejected for no other reason than that they had received the confidence of the President.

It was in pursuance of this purpose to absorb within its grasp the functions which legitimately appertain to the other branches of the Government, that it was proposed to take the pardoning power from the Executive where the Constitution has placed it, and, by an *expost facto* proceeding, confer it in certain contingencies upon Congress. When the insurgent armies surrendered, their soldiers became amenable to the then existing laws. It certainly could not have been supposed that they were to be prosecuted under new and different laws which were thereafter to be enacted. Yet it is a lamentable fact that Congress during the past two years has employed no inconsiderable portion of its time in devising new laws for the punishment of past offences—a proceeding bad in policy and repugnant to the great principles on which free governments are founded, and to the common sentiment of an enlightened age.

I have thus particularly brought to your attention these acts of the Federal Congress, because, in my judgment, their tendency is to revolutionize the character of our government; and, therefore, they vitally concern the people of Connecticut. That the inhabitants of the proscribed States will peacefully submit to the rule that has been provided for them, no one can doubt. Their helplessness to do otherwise, if nothing else, assures this. That a Union of co-equal States under the Constitution may result from their submission, is my most fervent hope. But questions of serious import to us will still remain. Will the precedent thus set by Congress be forgotten? Will the Constitution which is impotent to restrain the fury of a majority to-day, become the sacred shield it once was for the minority to-morrow? Will the sword that is so easily drawn to establish a Constitution now, be allowed to rest in its sheath if needed to overthrow a Constitution hereafter? It has been the honest boast and just glory of the soldier that he has saved to our people their old

flag without a star displaced or a stripe broken—but useless has been the sacrifice, if the people no longer retain their faith in constitutional government. If the charter of our liberties has been lost, nothing has been won.

More than ever at the present time should any infraction of the Constitution be regarded as a public calamity. By the vast increase of our public indebtedness every question which concerns the government credit comes home to every person in the land. By that credit all values are measured. It lies at the foundation of all our wealth, our industry—of society itself. No calamities of the past can exceed those which will befall us if the public credit should give way. But how is it to be preserved if the supreme law of the land is itself repudiated? In what market of the world is that government trusted which is swayed by revolutionary factions, intent only upon the gratification of ambition or the indulgence of partisan resentment? Had the efforts of Congress been properly directed, the industry and trade of the whole country would long since have felt the grateful influence, and the public credit been strengthened.

It has long been the pride of the people of Connecticut that within their borders the first experiment was made to govern man by a written Constitution. It is not strange that they have been quick to observe those signs which betoken danger to their chosen Government. They are a law-abiding and freedom-loving people; but, so long as their own history is remembered, they cannot forget that force, oppression, military authority, are not the proper instruments to bind a Nation together—that no Government can endure that has not its foundations laid in the affections of the people.

Trusting in the intelligence of the American people, let us indulge the hope that, from our experience of danger, we may learn to secure our future safety,—and that when calmer times succeed, the true principles of our republican system may be re-established by means of a legally constituted Convention, and that the foundations of the Union shall be re-laid upon the enduring principles of civil liberty and the equal rights of the States, with the limited powers of the Federal

Government and the indissolubility of the Union so clearly defined that our continuance as a people—one and indivisible—may be perpetual.

The paramount importance which the events of the past few years has given to subjects affecting the federal relations of our State, is my justification for dwelling thus at length upon them at the present time. To those matters which are especially committed to our local legislation, I now beg leave to call your attention.

FINANCIAL CONDITION.

From the detailed reports of the Treasurer and Comptroller, which will be laid before you, it will be seen that the financial condition of the State, at the close of the fiscal year ending March 31st, 1867, is quite satisfactory. At the commencement of the year the funded debt of the State amounted to ten millions four hundred thousand dollars, ($10,400,000,) with a Sinking Fund of one million two hundred and eleven thousand seven hundred and sixty-seven dollars and thirty-five cents, ($1,211,767.35.) The debt of four hundred thousand dollars, which was due a year ago from the State to the Sinking Fund, has been provided for by the purchase of State bonds to that amount, which have been placed to the credit of the Fund. A further purchase of State bonds has been made to the amount of one hundred and seventy-one thousand six hundred dollars, which are now in the hands of the Treasurer, and, as they are no longer needed for the purposes contemplated by the law authorizing their issue, I would recommend that the Treasurer and Comptroller be directed to cancel and destroy the same.

The Sinking Fund has been increased during the last year seventy-four thousand dollars, which amount has been invested in State bonds, making the whole amount of the Fund, at the close of the fiscal year, one million two hundred and eighty-four thousand three hundred and seven dollars and thirty-five cents, ($1,284,307.35.) The funded debt has been reduced the past year five hundred and seventy-one thousand

six hundred dollars, leaving the total amount, at the present time, nine millions eight hundred and twenty-eight thousand four hundred dollars, ($9,828,400.) If against this we place the amount of the Sinking Fund, and the market value of the Bank stock owned by the State, ($383,500,) together with the cash on hand at the close of the fiscal year, (amounting to $499,115.09,) it will leave the total liabilities of the State, over and above its assets, seven millions six hundred and sixty-one thousand four hundred and seventy-seven dollars and fifty-six cents, ($7,661,477.56.)

The State tax of three and a half mills on the dollar, realized the last year a revenue of one million fifteen thousand forty-five dollars and ninety-eight cents, ($1,015,045,98,) while the receipts from other sources amounted to eight hundred and ninety-four thousand twenty-nine dollars and fifteen cents, ($894,029.15.) Of the total amount of expenditures, reaching one million eight hundred and six thousand nine hundred and ninety-three dollars and eight cents, ($1,806,993.08,) six hundred and three thousand sixty-nine dollars and fifty cents, ($603,069.50,) was paid in interest on State bonds, and six hundred and forty-five thousand six hundred dollars, ($645,600,) in the purchase of State bonds.

The balance in the treasury on the first day of April, 1867, to the credit of the civil list, was four hundred thousand four hundred and eighty-three dollars and ten cents, ($400,483.10,) against two hundred and ninety-four thousand four hundred and one dollars and five cents, ($294,401.05,) in 1866; while the balance on the general list, standing to the credit of all accounts, was four hundred and ninety-nine thousand one hundred and fifteen dollars and nine cents, ($499,115.09,) against three hundred and fifty-three thousand six hundred and forty-four dollars, and thirty-nine cents, ($353,644.39,) at the close of the previous fiscal year.

There has been a marked increase in the taxable property of the State during the past year, the grand list of 1866 exceeding that of the previous year by thirteen millions nine hundred and twenty-six thousand six hundred and sixty-four dollars, ($13,926,664.) The grand list of 1865 was, in round

numbers, two hundred and seventy-six millions of dollars, and, with this increased valuation, amounted in 1866 to something over two hundred and ninety millions, including the taxable polls.

In view of the large amount of our public debt, I am constrained to urge upon your consideration the importance of observing the most rigid economy in each and every branch of the public expenditure, that the credit of the State may be preserved, the burdens of taxation lightened, the interest of the laboring classes subserved, and the time hastened when Connecticut shall once more be placed in the proud position, which it has so long been her historic boast to occupy, of a State free from debt.

THE SCHOOL FUND.

The amount of the capital of the School Fund, according to the last biennial examination, made in September, 1866, was two millions forty-three thousand eight hundred and thirty-five dollars and forty-seven cents ($2,043,835.47). A considerable portion of the fund heretofore loaned in the States of Ohio, New York and Massachusetts, has been collected and reloaned in this State, under the discretionary power given the Commissioner by the last General Assembly, to call in such foreign loans for reinvestment at home. The whole amount of the principal received into the treasury during the year and reloaned in this State, was one hundred and twenty-four thousand twenty-one dollars and forty-two cents ($124,021.42). The amount paid, on the orders of the Comptroller, for the benefit of the several school districts in the State, and for salaries and expenses during the year, was one hundred and thirty-five thousand three hundred and seventy-five dollars and sixty three cents ($135,375.63), with a surplus remaining of fifteen thousand seven hundred and fifteen dollars, subject to future orders.

The whole number of children entitled to the benefit of the fund by the last returns, was one hundred and twenty thousand eight hundred and twenty-four, and a per capita dividend was declared of one dollar and ten cents for each

scholar enumerated. For the expenses of managing the School Fund, and its present condition as compared with previous biennial statements, together with the disposition made of the Agricultural College fund, I would refer you to the report of the Commissioner, which will be submitted for your inspection. The School Fund is a sacred trust, around which every conceiveble safeguard should be thrown, and it should be so managed as to admit of no possible dimunition of the principal, whatever may be the annual income derived therefrom.

WAR CLAIMS.

Upon the war claims of the State which were outstanding a year ago, amounting to seventy-five thousand eight hundred and five dollars and ninety-five cents ($75,805.95) there has been paid by the General Government $6,750.20, and a further sum of about twenty thousand dollars will, in the opinion of my predecessor, be allowed and paid. The remainder has been rejected under rules which are supposed to apply to all the States alike. It is not impossible that some of the rules under which these and other claims have been rejected may be changed or relaxed, in which case a further sum may be obtained at some future day.

BANKS.

There are eight Banks only remaining in the State, exclusive of those organized under the National Banking Act, whose aggregate capital on the 1st of April last was $1,970,500, with a circulation amounting to only $111,747. The whole number of National Banks is eighty-two, with an aggregate capital of $24,496,600, making the total amount of banking capital in the State, $26,467,100.

The condition of the Savings Banks in the State, fifty-three in number, shows favorably with the report of last year, the gain in deposits amounting to $3,861,376.55. The whole amount of deposits in these Banks on the 1st day of January, 1867, was $31,180,390.14, while the market value of their assets amounted to $33,150,865.34.

RATE OF INTEREST.

The Legislatures of Massachusetts and Rhode Island having recently changed the laws of their States relating to interest, so as to admit of a higher rate than six per cent., where the amount is specified by contract, and the legal rate of interest in New York being seven per cent., it is a question proper for your consideration whether our laws should not be so modified as to conform to our monetary surroundings, and thereby prevent the diversion of capital from the State.

RAILROADS.

The condition and management of the railroads in the State, appear to be generally satisfactory. The number of passengers carried on the several roads during the year is considerably in excess of that given in the report of the Commissioners for the year previous, while there has been a corresponding increase in the net earnings of the roads. The number of casualties is especially small as compared with the number of passengers carried, and most if not all the roads, have been managed with a much greater regard to the security of life and the general comfort of passengers than formerly. The commissioners will recommend in their report some slight modifications in the laws relating to these important thoroughfares of the State, which will undoubtedly receive your proper consideration.

HUMANE INSTITUTIONS.

Our Institutions for the relief of the suffering and unfortunate, continue to hold a warm place in the affections of our people. They are ably conducted, and have pursued their beneficent work during the past year with gratifying results. The oldest of these, the American Asylum, for the education of the Deaf and Dumb, at Hartford, has just completed its fiftieth year. Seventeen hundred of these "Children of Silence" have received the benefit of its instructions, of which number two hundred and thirty were from Connecticut, and one hundred and ninety-five were aided by the State. It has

at present two hundred and twenty-four pupils, forty-four of whom are from this State.

The whole number of patients in the Retreat for the Insane, who have received during the year aid from the State, is two hundred and thirty-nine. Of these, one hundred and two have been discharged, leaving the number on the 1st day of April, 1867, one hundred and thirty-seven. A report, showing the condition of this Institution, and furnishing valuable facts for your information, will be laid before you.

GENERAL HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE.

Acting on the report of the Commission created in 1865, the last General Assembly provided for the establishment of a General Hospital for the Insane of the State, and appointed a Board of Trustees with authority to select a suitable location for such an institution. This duty the Trustees have discharged, and Middletown has been fixed upon as the place of location. An appropriation of thirty-five thousand dollars was made to carry into execution the provisions of the act, and workmen are now engaged in the erection of a suitable edifice for the accommodation of two hundred patients. An additional appropriation will be asked for the efficient prosecution of the work, and, in view of the pressing demand for such an institution, I would recommend that the needed appropriation be made.

REFORM SCHOOL.

From personal observation I am satisfied that the State Reform School is an economical and well managed institution. The report of the Trustees shows it to be in a flourishing condition, and free from debt. The present number of inmates is two hundred and sixty-four, which is fully equal to its capacity of accommodation. The fact that there has not been a death among the pupils during the past year, shows that the sanitary management of the school is in the highest degree efficient. This institution is accomplishing an important work, and should receive all needed encouragement and aid from the State. A small appropriation will be required

for repairs and improvements in the buildings, and I would recommend that the same be granted.

The last General Assembly appointed three Commissioners to inquire into the expediency of establishing an Industrial Institution for young vagrant and vicious girls, similar in character to the Meriden school for boys. This Commission will report in favor of establishing such an institution, and I have no doubt the subject will receive from you the consideration due to its very great importance.

Reports will be laid before you showing the present condition of the Connecticut School for Imbeciles, the Soldiers' Orphan Home, Fitch's Home for Soldiers, and the State Hospitals at Hartford and New Haven. All of these institutions appear to be well managed, and no doubt merit a continuation of the support they have received from the State.

STATE PRISON.

In the discipline and management of the State Prison, there continues to be a high degree of efficiency. The whole number of convicts in confinement on the 31st of March, 1867, was two hundred and seven. The financial condition of the Prison is most satisfactory. The gross amount of the earnings of the prisoners for the past year has been $23,324.69, and the total expenses $22,245.84, showing a net gain of $1,078.85, after expending some five hundred dollars in repairs and improvements about the Prison.

VITAL STATISTICS.

From the carefully arranged report of the State Librarian, it will be seen that there has been a large increase of births in the State over the registration of the previous year; and what especially indicates a healthy growth in our population, the number of births is greatly in excess of the deaths. The number of marriages is also remarkable, being considerably greater than ever reported in one year before. The year 1866 appears to have been one of remarkable general health throughout the State. The information embodied in these reports of the Librarian is highly valuable, and will be eagerly

sought after by those interested in the vital statistics of the State.

EDUCATION.

The subject of public education, important at all times to the welfare of the State, is continuing to receive the attention due to the magnitude of its interest. The Board created by the law of 1865 has taken the general supervision of the public schools, and it is believed that the cause of education has been favorably advanced under its management. The report of the Secretary of the Board, will exhibit in detail the condition of these important State institutions, so long the pride and boast of our people. It is hardly necessary for me to add that they should continue to receive the fostering care of the Legislature.

MILITIA.

The present militia law of the State appears to meet the general expectations of its friends. The whole number of men organized into companies and duly armed and equipped under the law, is four thousand one hundred and forty-one, among whom a highly creditable proficiency has been attained in drill and soldierly deportment. As the law now stands, it authorizes the formation of sixty infantry companies. The present number is forty-one, which would seem to be fully adequate to the requirements of the State. The report of the Adjutant General will show the organization of the force in detail, and present the facts necessary to a correct understanding of this important branch of the public service.

MINORS IN FACTORIES.

The practice prevalent in factories of employing minors in violation of law, is so universally admitted to be injurious to their physical and mental development, that I submit to the wisdom of the General Assembly whether it is not practicable to provide by further enactment for the due enforcement of the existing statute to protect children of tender years from such oppressive labor as deprives them of the advantages of a common school education.

THE JUDICIARY.

I renew the recommendation of my predecessor that provision be made to remedy the over-crowded condition of the court dockets in the larger counties. In the counties of New Haven and Hartford especially, the business of the courts is badly in arrears. No greater benefit can be conferred upon the people of the State generally, than to afford them the means of a speedy and consequently less expensive administration of justice; and while I am too distrustful of my own judgment on the subject to indicate at present just what is necessary to remedy the evil, I shall gladly co-operate in any plan of legislation which may upon inquiry be found adequate to the purpose.

THE HOURS OF LABOR.

Upon the products of labor depend the material prosperity and happiness of the people; and any legislation tending to ameliorate the burdens of labor can but promote the general welfare of the commonwealth. The policy of the State to provide by statute a standard for a legal day's labor, where no specific contract intervenes, is well settled. I therefore recommend that the forty-ninth section of Chapter IV., of the General Statutes, concerning domestic relations, be so amended as to make eight hours of labor done and performed in any one day by any one person in any mechanical or manufacturing establishment, a lawful day's work, unless otherwise agreed by the parties.

WAGES OF LABOR.

Under the present law of foreign attachment in this State any debt due for personal services, not exceeding ten dollars, is exempted from attachment. In my judgment this sum should be increased; and I recommend this subject to your favorable consideration.

POLL TAX.

Recognizing the principle that taxes should be assessed upon property and not upon persons, I recommend that so much of Chapter I. Title 64, of the General Statutes entitled

"An Act for the Assessment and Collection of Taxes," as relates to the assessment of the poll tax, be repealed.

COERCION OF VOTERS.

There is no subject which should demand a more constant scrutiny, or have greater safeguards and protection thrown around it, than the constitutional right of the citizen to the elective franchise. It is a right held sacred in all free governments, as upon its unrestrained and independent exercise depend the stability and permanence of all free institutions. It is believed that a most reprehensible practice has grown up in certain portions of the State, whereby the undue weight and influence of employers, or threats and intimidation from them, perform, in effect, the office of a bribe upon voters. This is an evil too intolerant in its spirit, and too pernicious in its character and influence, to be permitted to exist, under any pretext or color of authority whatever, in a free representative government. A contract for labor carries with it no consideration, pecuniary or otherwise, impairing the right of an elector to vote according to the strict letter of his oath, "without respect to persons, or favor of any man." There has been a growing complaint against this practice in the last few years, and I would recommend to your consideration the passage of a law which shall effectually reach and remedy the evil, and thereby protect the laboring man in the enjoyment of this paramount right of the citizen.

CONCLUSION.

Relying upon the Infinite Power which controls the destiny of States and of individuals, for wisdom and guidance, let us so perform our duties that our labors shall receive the approbation of those who have placed in our keeping the honor and welfare of the State.

JAMES E. ENGLISH.

HARTFORD, May 1, 1867.

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